



The President's Daily Brief

29 June 1970

49

~~Top Secret~~^{50X1}

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

29 June 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Cambodia: Military activity continues to ebb and flow; Taipei plans to send a delegation to Phnom Penh soon; Sihanouk's "foreign minister" has set up temporary headquarters in Cairo. (Page 1)

South Vietnam: Thieu's speech on 27 June described his cautious military policy. (Page 3)

Jordan: The new, more militant cabinet should work well with the moderate leaders of the fedayeen. (Page 5)

India: Mrs. Gandhi has shuffled her cabinet ministers into new slots, primarily to ensure that she makes most of the important decisions herself. (Page 6)

Latin America: [REDACTED]

(Page 7)

50X150X1

Egypt-USSR: Nasir may be on his way to Moscow. (Page 7)

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

Cambodia: Current Situation



99039 6-70 CIA

50X1

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

CAMBODIA

The Communists continue to press their attacks on the Lovek munitions depot in Kompong Chhnang Province. South Vietnamese air strikes have helped prevent the enemy from penetrating the government's defense perimeter. The depot's commander requested reinforcements on 27 June, claiming that his troops were exhausted and running low on ammunition following four days of fighting; Phnom Penh replied it will send a battalion.

The Cambodian Army command post in Kompong Speu city was attacked briefly by an enemy force of unknown size on 28 June. The headquarters of the North Vietnamese 101st Regiment apparently is still located 15 miles southwest of Kompong Speu; [redacted], only a subordinate battalion relocated to a position 27 miles west of the city.

50X1
50X1

Northeast of Phnom Penh, a combined Cambodian - South Vietnamese force, with Cambodian artillery support, has retaken the Mekong River village of Prek Tameak. Government forces have begun sweeping areas on the east bank of the river. In addition, press reports say two battalions of South Vietnamese Marines have moved westward from the Prey Veng area to new positions just east of the Mekong, and as close as six miles to Phnom Penh.

A Cambodian intercept states that 100 enemy troops harassed an army unit at Koki Thom, on Route 1 near the Neak Luong ferry, on the night of 27-28 June. The Communists also seized a village on Route 1, some 25 miles from Phnom Penh; government troops are being dispatched to retake it.

Some 300 enemy troops attacked a government unit on the west side of the Tonle Sap in Pursat Province on 28 June, according to an intercepted Cambodian Army message. This is the first substantial enemy action reported in this area. The message also reports that a government post on the east side of the Tonle Sap, just south of Siem Reap city, was attacked on 28 June. Analysis of enemy communications shows that forward elements of the Viet Cong 275th Regiment and the Viet Cong 5th Division are now in the Siem Reap area; this is the deepest westward movement of Communist main force elements detected to date.

(continued)

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

* * *

A Chinese Nationalist foreign office official told US Embassy officers in Taipei on 26 June that Taipei will send an official delegation to Phnom Penh in the near future. The visit is designed to pave the way for "closer relations" between the two governments, but the official cautioned that those relations would rest at an "unofficial level" for some time. He added that they probably would involve at least a limited Chinese Nationalist presence in the Cambodian capital.

* * *

Sihanouk's "foreign minister," Sarin Chhak, is making Cairo his temporary headquarters, according to a Radio Cairo report. Chhak was Cambodia's ambassador to the United Arab Republic at the time of Sihanouk's ouster. He probably will concentrate on increasing diplomatic support and recognition among Arab states for Sihanouk's government-in-exile. Cairo broke off diplomatic relations with Phnom Penh shortly after Lon Nol took over.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

SOUTH VIETNAM

In his televised speech to the nation on 27 June, President Thieu elaborated on the fairly cautious military policy toward Cambodia that he has been developing in recent weeks. He underscored his reluctance to allow the South Vietnamese Army to conduct large open-ended operations to defend Cambodia against the Communists. If the Cambodians request help when important centers come under Communist attack, Thieu promised only to "study each case."

Thieu clearly believes that the main burden of Cambodia's defense must rest with the Cambodians and that outside assistance must be provided by other free world countries as well as by South Vietnam. He seems fully conscious of the need to prevent South Vietnamese forces from becoming overextended in Cambodia, thereby reducing military strength at home as US troops continue to withdraw.

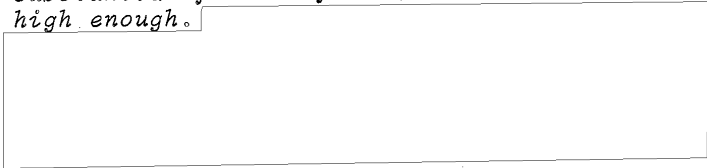
Thieu emphasized that South Vietnam's capabilities to help are modest, but he promised to help the Cambodians destroy Communist supply systems. In a similar vein, he expressed determination to prevent the enemy from re-establishing secure bases in Cambodian territory bordering on South Vietnam. Thieu also said that "minimum forces" would be stationed temporarily at certain points within Cambodia, but he claimed that this would be for the purpose of facilitating the repatriation of Vietnamese refugees.

Thieu's formulation serves a dual purpose: it helps allay domestic criticism that the government is doing too little to assist ethnic Vietnamese who have been victimized by the Cambodians; it may also help discourage Phnom Penh from interpreting the retention of these forces in Cambodia as evidence that the Saigon government is planning to undertake more extensive operations in defense of Cambodia than it is willing to admit.

(continued)

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

On the other hand, Thieu did not rule out the deployment of large South Vietnamese forces into Cambodia in the future. He and his military advisers would probably give very serious consideration to sending substantial forces if the stakes seemed high enough.



50X1

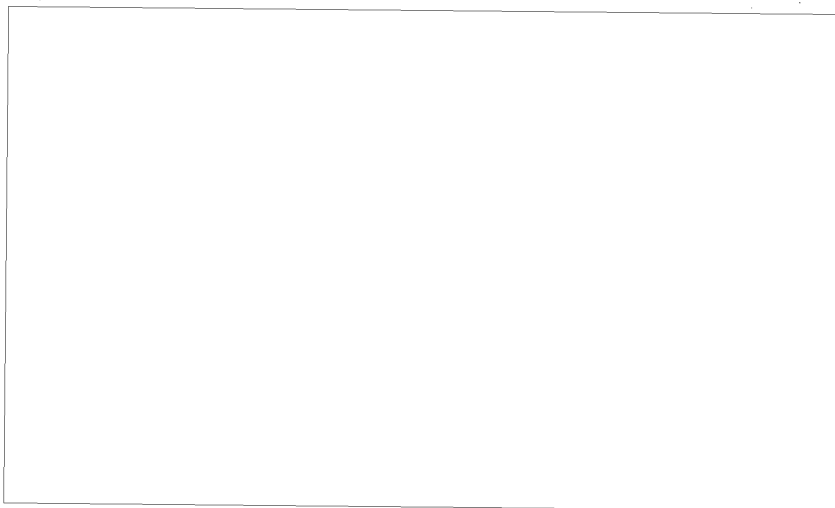
FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

JORDAN

The cabinet formed on 27 June will probably be acceptable to at least the more moderate fedayeen elements. The new premier, Abd al-Munim al-Rifai, has been the [redacted] negotiator in dealings with the Palestinian guerrillas, and it seems likely that the cabinet has the tacit approval of Fatah leader Yasir Arafat.

50X1



50X1

The newly militant government in Jordan should work well with the leaders of the moderate fedayeen. The activities of the more radical Palestinian groups, however, probably will continue to present difficult problems.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

INDIA

On 27 June, Prime Minister Gandhi announced some cabinet changes that reflect a shift in emphasis in her priorities. She assumed the Home portfolio, thus demonstrating her increased concern with law and order. For the past year she has held the Finance portfolio, and during most of that time she chose to fight her battles over economic issues. Recently, however, Hindu-Moslem rioting and violence by Communist extremists have increased the importance of decisions in the Home Ministry.

The major casualty of the cabinet shuffle was the anti-American, opportunistic external affairs minister, Dinesh Singh, who was demoted to minister of industrial development. The new foreign minister is former defense minister Swaran Singh. He was [redacted] noncontroversial when he served as foreign minister from 1964 to 1966.

50X6

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

NOTES

Latin America:

50X1

Egypt-USSR: We noted in The President's Daily Brief of 5 June that President Nasir was planning another trip to Moscow. Sources of the US Embassy there now say he will arrive shortly, possibly today. His agenda is not known; it may involve military and political discussions on a variety of topics, including the US political initiative, as well as a medical checkup by his Soviet doctors.

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

Top Secret